

**INCOMING TELEGRAM***Department of State*

43

Action

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Control: 9971

Rec'd: October 15, 1959  
7:47 p.m.NEA  
Info

FROM: London

SS

TO: Secretary of State

G

NO: 2037, October 15, 7 p.m.

SP

C

L

INR

PRIORITY

EUR

P

SENT DEPARTMENT 2037, REPEATED INFORMATION PRIORITY BAGHDAD 51,  
TEHRAN 51, KHORRAMSHAHR 3, BASRA UNNUMBERED.

UOP

E

IRC

Department telegram 2992

DCL

OCB

CIA

OSD

NAVY

RMR

Embassy discussed Shatt problem with Foreign Office (Le Quesne, acting head Eastern Department) October 15 in accordance reference telegram. Le Quesne showed Embassy telegram received from Tehran October 15 reporting conversation by British Embassy officer with Sanandaj, head of Iranian Foreign Office Department dealing with Iraq. Sanandaj stated instructions to Iranian authorities Khorramshahr were result of interdepartmental meeting at high level. Iran could no longer accept increasing Iraqi restrictions on navigation of Shatt. Iran fully aware of and prepared to accept possible implications actions it taking. Sanandaj said British advice would be welcome. He mentioned that Iraqi Consul General in Khorramshahr had ordered master of Pan-American LSMV which put into Khosroabad to report to Basra port authorities. Iran considering taking action against Consul General.

Le Quesne said he agreed with proposed US representations in Tehran. He also agreed there should not be joint demarche but rather parallel and concerted US and UK approaches.

Le Quesne was in process of drafting instructions to British Embassy Tehran covering following:

1.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~UNLESS "UNCLASSIFIED"  
REPRODUCTION FROM THIS  
COPY IS PROHIBITED.

CONFIDENTIAL

-2- 2037, October 15, 7 p.m. from London

1. Crux of matter is Iranian assertion Iraqis have increased restrictions on navigation on Shatt.
2. As far as UK aware this not accurate.
3. Iran may have good case with respect Khosroabad.
4. However, at time when navigation of Shatt is apparently proceeding smoothly would be difficult for Iran to justify before international public opinion steps which would appear to risk interference with navigation.
5. Statements by Sanandaj that Iraqi restrictions increasing and that he would welcome UK advice provide good opening for approach.

British Embassy should concert with American Embassy and subject to latter's views would speak with Iranian Foreign Office along above lines.

Le Quesne explained his intent was to avoid delay inherent in further exchange with Washington. Sanandaj's remarks made situation appear more threatening. In reply to question from Le Quesne Embassy assistant officer said he saw no objection to proposed instruction.

Re Iraq contention Khosroabad can not be used for technical reasons, Embassy consulted CINCNELM, which in turn queried British Admiralty. Admiralty replied it knew of no conceivable technical reasons against use Khosroabad. CINCNELM states it has no information to contrary. Foreign Office points out that according to British Consul in Khorramshahr Basra port authority has always maintained use of Khosroabad would be hazardous. On other hand, Iranians claim that in 1951 61 ships per month used Khosroabad. Iraqis in turn say situation existing in 1951 altered by increase in tanker traffic.

Embassy favors US approach described reference telegram which in its view correctly focuses on immediate question, i.e., detrimental effects of Iranian actions on Iraq situation, leaving substance of dispute for settlement at more propitious moment.